

June 20, 2008

REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR ZALMAY KHALILZAD,  
U.S. PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE,  
ON KOSOVO, LEBANON AND IRAN,  
AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL STAKEOUT,  
JUNE 20, 2008

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**Ambassador Khalilzad:** Good afternoon. You all witnessed the discussion with regards to the Secretary-General's proposed configuration. It's fair to say that most of those who spoke believe that it is within his authority to do what he has proposed. You heard for yourself different evaluations of his proposal. Speaking for the United States, we believe that the situation has changed fundamentally, Kosovo is an independent state, that's irreversible, and that there is a need for a continuing UN role, but a role that's very different than it was, and that the institution of Kosovo, EULEX increasingly will take the lead and that the UN will have to adjust downwards, and the Secretary-General's proposal is a practical way, given the differences that exist in the Council, to move forward.

We have had a discussion inside the consultations on the LRA, the Great Lakes area, and, under other matters, the issue of the format of the Zimbabwe meeting was raised, and because of the lateness of the hour - lunchtime, in other words, - we decided to suspend until three o'clock and we'll get back to work at that time. Thank you very much.

**Reporter:** Speaking about the proposal by the Secretary-General, there is a feeling that there is almost twelve members fully support the Secretary-General's proposal, three member countries are against, one of them is Russia, with veto power. What do you expect will be the next step, because that was just the first step and probably will continue...

**Ambassador Khalilzad:** I don't think the Council is in a position to confront the situation in Kosovo. Therefore, the reality on the ground is going to be determinative, and everyone will have to adjust to that. The Secretary-General is adjusting. Some would like the adjustment to have gone further, but adjustment is occurring. The Secretary-General is recognizing that there is a change. And, you know, forty-three countries already recognize Kosovo, EULEX is coming in, more countries will recognize, the Constitution has been approved, laws are being passed, hopefully Serbia will change policy. Serbs have legitimate - the Serbian government has legitimate interests there - they are neighbors, the vision is for both to join Europe - that they will find a way as time goes on, as the Serbs find their bearings, given the new reality, that there can be mutual accommodation based on the fact of Kosovo independence without ethnic division inside Kosovo.

**Reporter:** (inaudible) Serbia will not recognize?

**Ambassador Khalilzad:** Well, he asked me whether I felt his pain, I know I have said we have great respect for him personally and we understand, I have said that repeatedly in my previous statements, that this is not easy for Serbia. I mean, no one who knows anything about that region of the world, about the history of Serbia, would not appreciate how difficult it is. But we can't look to the past. We need to take account of the past, but we need to look to the future, and I think European integration for both is the future, and I hope that the Serb policies will adjust.

**Reporter:** Well, feeling his pain of course is very presidential of you Ambassador.

**Ambassador Khalilzad:** I'm the President of the Security Council, remember.

**Reporter:** I was thinking of another kind maybe but we won't get into that. While of course being supportive of the Secretary-General's initiative, you did nevertheless express some concerns the U.S. has, could you summarize those and how you think the Secretary-General – where he should – how he should tweak it? Where it should go here in terms of maybe going stronger even – making it stronger for the EU or whatever?

**Ambassador Khalilzad:** I wanted to emphasize particularly two points in terms of our concern. One is that we would have liked to have a more definitive statement of the diminishing role of the UN and that was point one. And point two is that our concern with regard to the dealings with Serbia on the issue of Kosovo. That it has to be based on the recognition by him of an independent Kosovo. That everything that takes place in these discussions, we are not against the discussions, but what takes place in the discussions have to be informed by agreement of the sovereign government of Kosovo and that – so those were the two concerns we had. Thank you.

**Reporter:** I have one more question please, on Lebanon?

**Ambassador Khalilzad:** That was of course as the U.S.

**Reporter:** Secretary Rice yesterday met with Mr. Ban Ki-moon and we wanted to ask whether they have discussed the issue of Shebaa and what you plan to do as the U.S. on this level sir?

**Ambassador Khalilzad:** Well of course you heard the Secretary of State speak on settlements. You heard her speak on Shebaa in the course of her recent visit to the region. You know that there is some discussion going on about a possible UN Security Council Resolution or action of some kind that has been proposed by the Arab states and you've heard me speak about this issue before, of the UN Security Council role. I

have had a meeting with the representative of the Arab League and those discussions are ongoing with them. I understand they are also meeting with the other members of the Council. They met me in my capacity as the U.S. representative to consult on the resolution and I have made the points to them - I made the points to them that I made to you about the timing, about the content, about the sensitivity that there is on the Security Council dealing with this issue and of course the fact that that sensitivity - that anything that the Council considers has to be balanced.

**Reporter:** How concerned are you about the attack by Israelis against Iran?

**Ambassador Khalilzad:** I saw the article in the paper about it today. You know our view with regard to Iran, which is that this would be unacceptable for Iran to acquire nuclear weapons given the sensitivity of that area, given Iran's government's policies. But that right now we are in the phase of diplomacy, that's what we're pushing for. We want a diplomatic solution to this problem. The ball is frankly in Iran's court because Resolutions have been passed, sanctions have been imposed; now Mr. Solana and several others went and offered some additional incentives and the Iranian reaction, and authoritative reaction we're still waiting to hear. But Iran has to - the government has to recognize that the international community takes this issue very seriously - that there will have to be further measures if they continue to be in defiance of the international community. Again, as you know, I've said repeatedly everyone understands that if Iran's interest is nuclear electricity, peaceful use of nuclear power, we understand that and solutions are needed to deal with the issue of fuel supply. That we understand for future reactors.

**Reporter:** (inaudible) strike on Iran?

**Ambassador Khalilzad:** No, I said we are in the phase of diplomacy. We want a diplomatic settlement of this issue. Thank you.